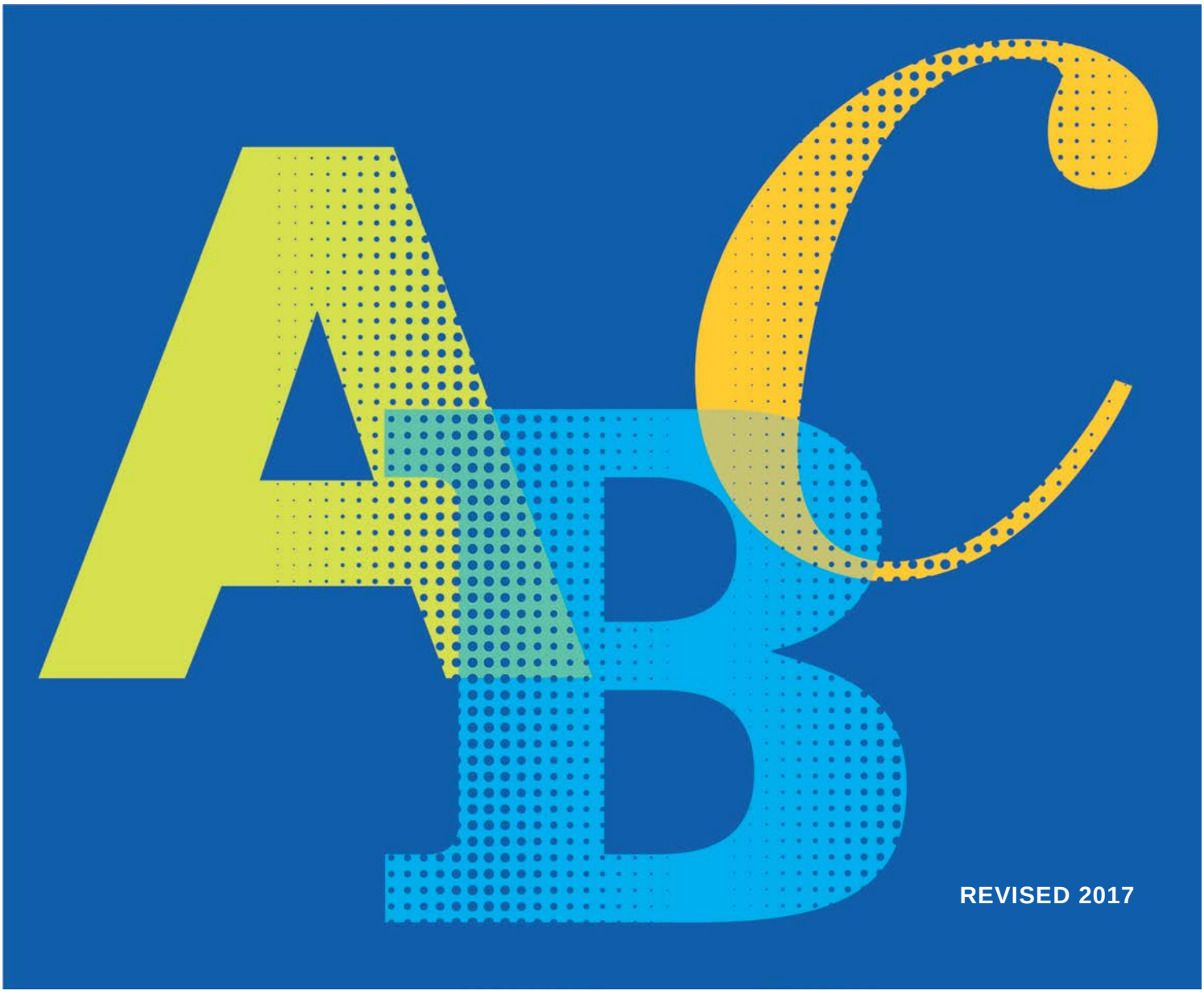
NEW YORK STATE
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards

GRADES
P-12

Introduction



REVISED 2017

Introduction to the NYS Standards Design Process

In 2015, New York State (NYS) began a process of review and revision of its current English Language Arts (ELA) Learning Standards adopted in January 2011. The New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards (Revised 2017) were developed through numerous phases of public comment as well as virtual and face-to-face meetings with committees consisting of NYS educators, teachers of English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners and Students with Disabilities, parents, curriculum specialists, school administrators, college professors, and experts in cognitive research. These revised standards reflect the collaborative efforts and expertise among all constituents involved.

The New York State Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards (Revised 2017) consist of revisions, additions, deletions, vertical movement, and clarifications of the current English Language Arts Standards. They are defined as the knowledge, skills, and understanding that individuals can and do habitually demonstrate over time when exposed to high-quality instructional environments and learning experiences.

Context for Revision of the NYS Next Generation English Language Arts Learning Standards

CHANGING EXPECTATION FOR LITERACY ACHIEVEMENT

Today's context for English Language Arts instruction and Learning Standards mark an inflection point for NYS and the field of education. Indeed, nationally and across the state, districts are increasingly focused on literacy instruction from the earliest years right through adolescence with the goal of developing models and curricula that support universal literacy achievement, while accommodating two key changes: 1) the new demands for what it means to be literate in today's knowledge-based economy and information age; and 2) the demographic shifts in the population.

Advanced Literacy: A Call to Prepare Our Students for Lifelong Learning

The rate at which knowledge is generated and shared today, often via technology, is unprecedented in human history. To keep pace, today's children must become tomorrow's lifelong learners, able to marshal reading, writing and thinking skills. Today's children must also become adults who are able to communicate and navigate an increasingly interconnected society—one in which literacy skills are routinely called upon. In other words, all students in NYS classrooms must develop advanced literacies. ***Advanced literacies*** **denote a set of skills and competencies that enable communication, spoken and written, in increasingly diverse ways and with increasingly diverse audiences.** This requires writing with precision, reading with understanding and speaking in ways that communicate thinking clearly. Advanced literacies also promote the understanding and use of text for a variety of purposes. Likewise they make way for participation in academic, civic, and professional communities, where knowledge is shared and generated.

Reading and writing—both language-based competencies—have become prerequisites for participation in nearly every aspect of day-to-day, 21st-century life. While there was a time when basic literacy skills provided a clear path forward, today's students need to develop an increasingly complex set of literacy skills and competencies in order to access social and economic opportunities. In this knowledge-based economy

and information-age, what counts as "literate" has changed dramatically over the last few decades.[1] To be academically and personally successful in today's literacy- and knowledge-based society and economy, every student needs to develop **advanced literacies.**[2] This term denotes skills and competencies that enable communication, spoken and written, in increasingly diverse ways and with increasingly diverse audiences. Advanced literacies also promote the understanding and use of text for a variety of purposes. Likewise they make way for participation in academic, civic, and professional communities, where knowledge is shared and generated.

Lifelong Practices of Readers and Writers: Overview

One new aspect in the revised Standards is the inclusion of the Lifelong Practices of Readers and Writers, which aim to reflect the changing expectations for what it means to be literate today. To optimally support this vision for literacy classroom planning, coursework and instruction based on the ELA standards should develop within the context of the Lifelong Practices of Readers and Writers. Once firmly and richly developed, these practices extend well beyond graduation, as qualities of lifelong learning. These practices are a context for the NYS English Language Arts Learning Standards which, in turn, support these practices by specifying grade level expectations for readers and writers.

The chart on the following page outlines some of the most important practices expected of readers and writers. Although there are two lists, these practices are blended. For example, by design, the first bullet under reading intentionally mentions thinking, writing, speaking, and listening. In other words, successful readers employ a complex web of skills in order to become effective communicators who strive to understand the world around them. Similarly, writers use a blend of thinking, reading, speaking, and listening as they strengthen their writing.

The practices also indicate that teachers should expect students to read often and widely from a range of and diverse texts, in terms of content, language, origin, medium, and text type. The New York State Education Department remains committed to encouraging local districts to choose the literature and informational texts they use as they design their ELA curriculum or programs. One dimension of this choice includes the diversity of texts. Teachers should encourage students to explore a wide range of texts, including a balance of classical and contemporary literature. Students should also read full-length and shorter texts from a variety of cultures and viewpoints, both in print and digital media.

[1] Levy, F., & Murnane, R.J. (2013). Dancing with robots: Human skills for computerized work. Washington, DC: Third Way. Retrieved from content.thirdway.org/publications/714/ Dancing-With-Robots.pdf

[2] Lesaux, N.K., Phillips Galloway, E. & Marietta, S.H. (2016). Leading Advanced Literacy Instruction in Linguistically Diverse Schools: A Guide for Education Leaders. New York: Guilford Press.

Lifelong Practices of Readers and Writers

Lifelong Practices of Readers	Lifelong Practices of Writers
Readers: • think, write, speak, and listen to understand • read often and widely from a range of global and diverse texts • read for multiple purposes, including for learning and for pleasure • self-select texts based on interest • persevere through challenging, complex texts • enrich personal language, background knowledge, and vocabulary through reading and communicating with others • monitor comprehension and apply reading strategies flexibly • make connections (to self, other texts, ideas, cultures, eras, etc.)	Writers: • think, read, speak, and listen to support writing • write often and widely in a variety of formats, using print and digital resources and tools • write for multiple purposes, including for learning and for pleasure • persevere through challenging writing tasks • enrich personal language, background knowledge, and vocabulary through writing and communicating with others • experiment and play with language • analyze mentor texts to enhance writing • strengthen writing by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach

Reading and Writing for Enjoyment and Self-Expression

READING & SPEAKING

While deep analysis of text for learning about the world is an important component of instruction, students should also read for enjoyment and personal interest. Student selection of text, as well as time to read and write for enjoyment, expression, and connection with others, is included in the Lifelong Practices of Readers and Writers section. Classroom teachers, parents, and school and community librarians can serve as great resources to connect students to texts and information. Discussion of text with peers and educators constitutes an important and authentic way to engage students in reading for pleasure. Because texts offer insight into the world around us and into the motivations and perspectives of others, conversations about what students have read for pleasure constitutes an important activity for building perspective taking skills, socio-emotional competence and understanding of the self in the world. It is also the case that participation in these activities is highly engaging and offers an avenue for motivating students to read for the pure enjoyment of the task. Connecting reading and speaking is important for all students.

WRITING & SPEAKING

Teachers will notice that the number of writing standards has been streamlined and consolidated. Because some of the original standards outlined almost identical expectations from year to year, they have been moved to the Lifelong Practices of Writers in order to show more clearly that every lesson, throughout every school year, should support the practices that help to develop strong and effective writers. For example, the Practices state that students should "write often and widely in a variety of formats, using print and digital resources." This expectation provides a foundation for program design as teachers prepare writing lessons and opportunities for students. As teachers support this practice, students will have regular and frequent opportunities to write in a variety of formats, producing texts that fall into one or more of the following domains—research, argument, explanation, description, analysis, and narration, as well as creative texts, such as stories and poems. Given the iterative nature of a strong writing process, and that crafting a solid argument or eloquent piece of writing is less about *writing* and more about conceptual reasoning and planning, the Lifelong Practices of Writers section also includes elements of a recursive approach to writing, including revision and multiple drafts, based on feedback from peers, and teachers**.** In this way, discussion about writing—both during the pre-writing and revision stages— serves to create a community of writers in which the task of writing becomes authentically about sharing what we have written. Not only does this mirror how writing is used across the life course, it promotes a culture in which self-expression is valued and producing academic language is practiced regularly in an authentic context, and connected to content.

English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners and the Standards

The need to promote advanced literacies among all students comes at a time when the system is already charged with building up language skills among the increasingly diverse population. Students who are English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs) now comprise over 20% of the school-age population, which reflects significant growth in the past several decades. Between 1980 and 2009, this population increased from 4.7 to 11.2 million young people, or from 10 to 21% of the school-age population.

The greatest growth has occurred in our secondary schools.[3] This growth will likely continue in U.S. schools; by 2030, it is anticipated that 40% of the school-age population in the U.S. will speak a language other than English at home.[4] Today, in schools and districts across the U.S., many students other than those classified as ELL are learning English as an additional language, even if not in the initial stages of language development—these children are often described as "language minority learners." Likewise, many students, large numbers of whom are growing up in poverty, speak a dialect of English that is different from the academic English found in school curriculum.[5]

Each of these groups—ELLs/MLLs, language minority learners, and students acquiring academic English—often struggle to access the language, and therefore the knowledge, that fills the pages of academic texts, despite their linguistic assets. In turn, these students are over-represented among students identified with disabilities. Therefore, the context for this new set of English Language Arts Learning Standards is that there is a pressing need to provide instruction that not only meets, but exceeds standards, as part of system-wide initiative to promote equal access to advanced literacy for all learners while capitalizing on linguistic and cultural diversity.

To further support the implementation of the Next Generation Learning Standards, additional guidance on working with linguistically diverse learners through a series of topic briefs that can be accessed at http://www.nysed.gov/bilingual-ed.

Students with Disabilities and the Standards

One of the fundamental tenets guiding educational legislation (the *No Child Left Behind Act*, and the *Every Student Succeeds Act*), and related policies over the past 15-years, is that all students, including students with disabilities, can achieve high standards of academic performance. A related trend is the increasing knowledge and skill expectations for PreK-Grade 12 students, especially in the area of reading and language arts, required for success in postsecondary education and 21st Century careers. Indeed, underdeveloped literacy skills have profound academic, social, emotional, and economic consequences for students, families, and society.

At the same time, the most recently available federal data[6] presents a portrait of the field reflecting both challenges and opportunities.

Students served under IDEA, Part B: During the 2012-13 school year, there was a total of 5.83 million students with disabilities, ages 6-21; an increase from 5.67 million in 2010-11.

[3] Garcia, E. E., & Cuellar, D. (2006). Who Are These Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students?. *Teachers College Record*, *108*(11), 2220-2246.

[4] Camarota, S. A. (2012). *Immigrants in the United States: A profile of America's foreign-born population*. Center for Immigration Studies.

[5] Aud, S., Planty, M., & Hussar, W. J. (2011). *Condition of education 2011*. Government Printing Office.

[6] U.S. Department of Education. *37th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act*, 2015.

Access to the general education program: More than 60 percent (62.1%) of students, ages 6 through 21 served under IDEA, Part B, were educated in the regular classroom 80% or more of the day, up from 60.5% in 2010-11.

Participation in state assessments: Between 68.1 and 84.1 percent of students with disabilities in each of grades 3 through 8 and high school participated in the regular state assessment in reading based on grade-level academic achievement standards with or without accommodations.

English language arts proficiency: The median percentages of students with disabilities in grades 3 through 8 and high school who were administered the 2012-13 state assessment in reading based on grade-level academic achievement standards who were proficient ranged from 25.4 to 37.3 percent.

Graduation: Over sixty percent (65.1%) of students with disabilities graduated with a regular high school diploma.

Overall, the number of students with disabilities is increasing nationwide, as is their access to the general education curriculum, and participation in the regular state ELA assessments. Attaining proficiency and graduating with a regular high school diploma are areas where significant improvements are needed.

Therefore, each student's individualized education program (IEP) must be developed in consideration of the State learning standards and should include information for teachers to effectively provide supports and services to address the individual learning needs of the student as they impact the student's ability to participate and progress in the general education curriculum. In addition to supports and services, special education must include specially designed instruction, which means adapting, as appropriate, the content, methodology or delivery of instruction to address the unique needs that result from the student's disability. By so doing, the teacher ensures each student's access to the general education curriculum so that he or she can meet the learning standards that apply to all students. The *Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities* focuses on seven core evidence-based principles for students with disabilities to ensure they have the opportunity to benefit from high quality instruction and to reach the same academic standards as all students. For additional information, please see http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/publications/2015-memos/blueprint-for-improved-results-for-students-with-disabilities.html.

Early Learning and the Standards

As with all learners, but especially for our youngest learners, the English Language Arts Standards should be implemented with careful understanding of child development and developmentally appropriate practice. The academic foundation that is set for our youngest learners is essential, and the social emotional needs and environment for learning are key ingredients for student success. As these standards are implemented, it is important to meet the needs of the "whole child," recognizing that a well-rounded education, positive learning environment, strong home-school connection, and high expectations all contribute to student success. The NYSED Early Learning Task Force, which includes over 30 educators from across New York State, has been organized to make recommendations around resources to support early learning. The work started in February 2017 and will continue in the coming months. Updates will be provided on the AIMHighNY website (http://www.nysed.gov/aimhighny).

For Prekindergarten, please also see the NYSED Prekindergarten Standards (https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-prekindergarten-foundation-for-the-common-core) which, in addition to including the ELA Standards, include many early learning standards arranged in the five developmental domains. The ELA standards for prekindergarten students are embedded in the Communication, Language, and Literacy Domain. A brief description of each domain appears below:

- **Approaches to Learning** – How children become involved in learning and acquiring knowledge.
- **Physical Development and Health** – Children's physical health and ability to engage in daily activities.
- **Social and Emotional Development** – The emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children's experiences in the home, school, and larger community.
- **Communication, Language, and Literacy** – How children understand, create, and communicate meaning.
- **Cognition and Knowledge of the World** – What children need to know and understand about their world and how they apply what they know.

It is also the case that many of our youngest learners enter our classrooms with knowledge of a language other than English. It begins with communicating to children and their families that their home languages are welcome at school even when the adults may struggle to understand. These young Emergent Multilingual Learners (EMLLs) are in the process of simultaneously acquiring language skills and the commensurate knowledge of the sounds that map to printed text in two or more languages. The instruction for these learners should include the high-quality language and literacy interactions that support their monolingual peers, but should also be attune to ways that this additional linguistic and cultural knowledge can be used as an asset for supporting literacy learning. And we know from the research on supporting the literacy skills of this growing population, that the single most important factor for their later educational success is the quality of the language-learning environment, especially the quality of the adult-child language exchanges and opportunities for extended conversations.

The home languages of New York's EMLLs represent an important resource to scaffold learning and contribute significantly to academic achievement. Teachers of EMLLs can integrate children's home languages strategically to support comprehension, engagement, scaffolding, practice, assessment, and extending. From the physical environment to the daily schedule, the teacher can model the usefulness of the home language for learning and promote a positive perspective of multilingualism and multiculturalism[7]. Given the vital importance of language exposure to language learning, creating an environment that provides children with rich language, even while children may be acquiring familiarity with the language of the classroom, is paramount—in these classrooms children should be supported to produce language in English and in the home language.

For more information on supporting EMLLs, please visit: http://www.nysed.gov/program-offices/office-bilingual-education-and-world-languages-obewl/

[7] Morell, Zoila. Emergent Multilingual Learners in Prekindergarten: A Protocol for Identification, Instructional Planning, & Programming, 2017.

Understanding the English Language Arts Learning Standards

New York State has a rich history of learning standards, with educational expectations dating back to the 1800s. The development of the first set of student learning standards in seven content areas began in the early 1990s. The English Language Arts Learning Standards outline what a student should know and be able to do independently by the end of each grade. The heart of the document consists of grade-level specifications of the overall anchor standards. These **anchor standards** represent broad statements about the expectations for students as they prepare for high school graduation, positioning them for potential success in either college or careers, or both. Each of the **grade level standards** represents a set of more specific, end-of-year expectations.

For each anchor standard, a series of expectations are outlined for students at all grade-levels, from the Prekindergarten level to the graduation-ready level of 11th and 12 graders. Though the expectations for literacy achievement increase in each grade-level, the standards assume a sustained focus on particular across grade-levels. This is why there is overlap in the expectations outlined for students' learning from one grade to the next and even repetition in the set of expectations outlined for learners from grade to grade.

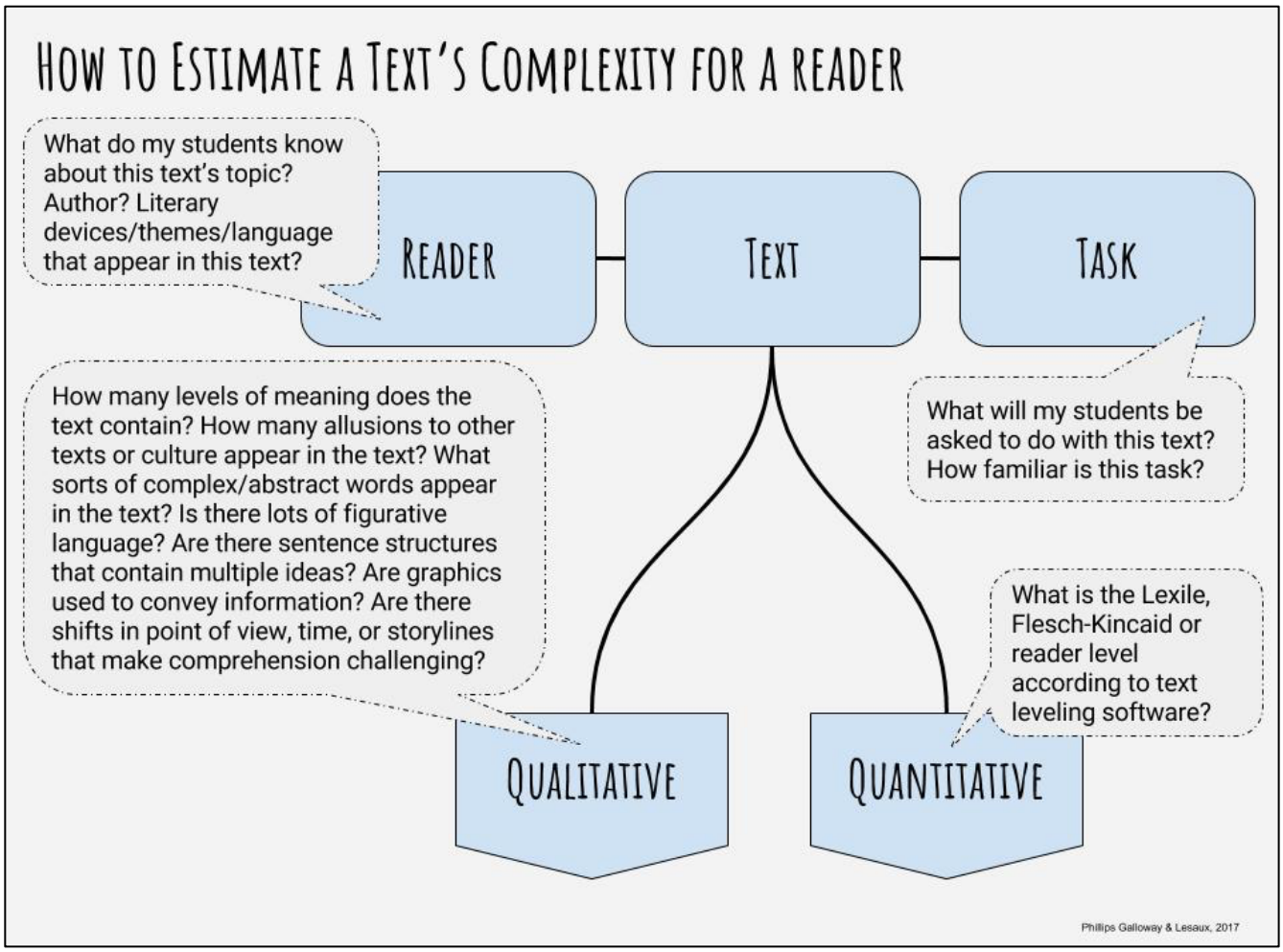
The expectations for learning outlined in the Standards are intentionally broad. While the Standards set grade-specific expectations for literacy learning, they do not define the intervention methods or materials necessary to support students who are well below or well above grade-level expectations. It is also beyond the scope of the standards to define the full range of supports appropriate for English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs) and Students with Disabilities. As noted, however, teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs)/Multilingual Learners (MLLs) and Students with Disabilities participated in the revision of the standards, and the expectation is that Standards are for all learners.

In addition, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) has created two statewide frameworks, the *Blueprint for English Language Learner Success*, *and the Blueprint for Improved Results for Students with Disabilities* aimed to clarify expectations and to provide guidance for administrators, policymakers, and practitioners to prepare ELLs/MLLs and Students with Disabilities for success. These principles for instruction outlined in the frameworks are intended to enhance programming and improve instruction that would allow for students who bring diversity to our classrooms—whether in the form of linguistic, cultural, and/or learning abilities and needs—to reach the same standards as all students and leave school prepared to successfully transition to post-school learning, living, and working. Given today's context, as previously discussed, the standards should be read as allowing for and, more importantly, promoting the instructional principle of universal design. As such, classrooms that aim to achieve the standards are engineered to allow for all learners to participate fully at all times and from the outset of any instructional endeavor. The underlying aim of the Standards when guiding instructional design and implementation is that students should receive appropriate accommodations to ensure their maximum participation and that their diversity is treated as an asset to the learning environment. No set of grade-specific standards can fully reflect the diversity among today's students in any given classroom—diversity with respect to learning needs and profiles, learning rates, linguistic or cultural background, and achievement levels. However, the standards intend to provide clear signposts along the way to accomplish the goal of college and career readiness among all students.

Range of Reading and Text Complexity Expectations

One of the most important elements of the English language arts standards is the concept of exposing all students to grade-level texts that contain ideas and language that are at a suitable level of complexity, which is critical to preparing students for college and careers. **This expectation is the cornerstone for the New York State English Language Arts Learning Standards when the standards refer to "texts of appropriate complexity at or above grade level."** For clear guidance regarding text complexity for each grade level band (grades 2-3, 4-5, 6-8, 9-10 and 11-12), see *supplemental information on text complexity available on EngageNY:* https://www.engageny.org/resource/appendix-a-common-core-standards-for-elaliteracy-supporting-research-and-glossary

The graphic below helps to demonstrate the relationship between qualitative and quantitative measures of text complexity, as well as the key relationship of reader and task as teachers select appropriate texts for their students to read and comprehend. The basic understanding that this figure conveys is that a text may be complex (or not) given a number of factors: the task that students are asked to complete, the profile of learners in a classroom and the characteristics of the text, itself. As such, each element—aspects of the text, task or the intended reader—cannot be taken as the sole determinant of text complexity for a grade; instead, determining text complexity requires taking each aspect into account.



Here, we discuss the aspects of text that must be considered as a component of determining text complexity and the various tools to do this. Traditionally, we have looked to tools for measuring text complexity (e.g., text levelers). While useful to gain a basic understanding of the challenges that the language of a text might pose to most readers, like any one measure, these automated measures are imperfect. These *quantitative measures* of text complexity employ algorithms to measure dimensions of text complexity (e.g., word frequency and difficulty, sentence length, and text cohesion) (see for instance, the Lexile framework). Quantitative analyses place a text within a text complexity grade band by evaluating the language of the text alone. The chart below resents the quantitative ranges for text complexity by grade band.

Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges from Multiple Measures[1]

NYELA Grade Band	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power®	Fleisch-Kincaid[2]	The Lexile Framework®	Reading Maturity	Text Evaluator
2nd-3rd	2.75–5.14	42–54	1.98–5.34	420–820	3.53–6.13	100–590
4th-5th	4.97–7.03	52–60	4.51–7.73	740–1010	5.42–7.92	405–720
6th-8th	7.00–9.98	57–67	6.51–10.34	925–1185	7.04–9.57	550–940
9th-10th	9.67–12.01	62–72	8.32–12.12	1050–1335	8.41–10.81	750–1125
11th-CCR	11.20–14.10	67–74	10.34–14.2	1185–1385	9.57–12.00	890–1360

Texts may also contain elements that make reading challenging that are not captured by automated measures. Therefore, qualitative analysis can provide the kind of specific information needed to determine the utility of using a text with a specific grade-level. For example, the complexity of a text's structure, the accessibility of the language conventionality and clarity, levels of meaning conveyed by the author, and knowledge demands placed on readers must be assessed by educators. Qualitative measures themselves are neither anchored in college- and career-readiness levels, nor band or grade specific; they depend on the professional judgments of teachers or other trained, professional evaluators. For instance, a quantitative analysis can situate a text in the grades 6-8 text complexity band; a qualitative analysis conducted by the teacher then can determine if the text is better suited for grade 6 rather than grade 8 students, and when in the year to introduce such a text.[8]

Considerations that are associated with the readers in a classroom and the task provide additional information to determine text selection and complexity. Here, teachers consider the student's motivation, background knowledge, and task variables (what students are asked to do with the text) as final determinations about whether to use a text for study or not. As importantly, considering reader and task factors aid educators in deciding what scaffolds and supports are necessary to help students to access and understand the text.

[8] Certain texts do not lend themselves well to a quantitative analysis: poetry, drama/plays are best evaluated by a combination of a robust qualitative analysis, reader and task considerations, and teacher professional judgment.

The Standards and Reading Foundational Skills P-5

The foundational skills included in these standards are an essential component of early and intermediate literacy learning. They provide a foundation upon which students build as they develop increasingly deeper proficiency with advanced literacy skills. As such, mastery of these components is vital to further learning. It is important to note, however, that foundational skills are built simultaneously with comprehension, vocabulary, and oral language skills and are therefore only a part of a comprehensive and effective reading program in which they also read a variety of texts accurately and automatically. Because many of these early literacy skills develop along a continuum from simpler to more complex, it is important that instruction be differentiated according to what students are already able to do and not do. That is, proficient readers will need less instruction and practice with these skills and concepts than those who are struggling. It is necessary to identify where students are in these progressions and employ targeted instruction, focusing on what students need to learn and not on what they already know

How to Read the English Language Arts Learning Standards

The English Language Arts Learning Standards are organized by grade-level from Prekindergarten through grade eight and by grade-band (9-10 and 11-12) at the high school level.

Learning Standards define what a student should know and be able to do.

Anchor Standards represent broad statements about the expectations for students as they prepare for high school graduation, positioning them for college and careers. There are 28 English Language Arts Anchor Standards in Reading, Writing, Listening & Speaking, and Language.

Grade-level and Grade-band Standards describe specific end-of-year expectations about what students should understand and be able to do at a specific grade level or grade band (for grades 9-10 and 11-12). The grade-level and grade-band standards are connected to the Anchor Standards.

Lifelong Practices of Readers and Writers exemplify important reading and writing practices that should begin in the early grades and continue through high school and life. These practices should be used in conjunction with the grade-level learning standards and be part of classroom instruction.

Strands define the main organizational categories for English Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language).

Range of Student Reading Experiences sections clarify the reading and text complexity expectations for each grade level. This is located at the beginning of the Reading Standards at each grade level or grade band.

5th Grade Writing Standards

Grade-level and Strand

Text Types and Purposes

5W1: Write an argument to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- 5W1a: Introduce a precise claim and organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- 5W1b: Provide logically ordered reasons that are supported by facts and details from various sources.
- 5W1c: Use precise language and content-specific vocabulary while offering an opinion on a topic.
- 5W1d: Use appropriate transitional words, phrases, and clauses to clarify and connect ideas and concepts.
- 5W1e: Provide a concluding statement or section related to the argument presented.
- 5W1f: Maintain a style and tone appropriate to the writing task.

5W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to explore a topic and convey ideas and information relevant to the subject.

- 5W2a: Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general focus, and organize related information logically.
- 5W2b: Develop a topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other relevant information; include text features, illustrations, and multimedia to aid comprehension.
- 5W2c: Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain a topic.
- 5W2d: Use appropriate transitional/linking words, phrases, and clauses to clarify and connect ideas and concepts.
- 5W2e: Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.
- 5W2f: Establish a style aligned to a subject area or task.

5W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Grade-level Standards

Using this Document

In order to help curriculum planners, this document bundles together a variety of resources. It begins with this Introduction, which includes the sections: *How to Read the Standards* and the *Lifelong Practices of Readers and Writers*. These practices outline those expectations for students—and their teachers—that pervade the entire literacy curriculum and instructional model, from P-12. These lifelong practices intend to position students for success in college and/or careers, given the demands for what it means to be literate today. We expect all students, irrespective of grade-level, to "**think, write, speak, and listen to understand"** *every day, in all subject areas.* These foundational "Practices," therefore, should appear at the forefront of all programmatic planning and design. They should also serve as helpful reminders for all teachers, for each daily lesson.

By design, these standards do not specify any one method of instruction or approach. Specific programmatic design, choices in literature, and instructional strategies and approaches all remain as decisions for individual districts. In order to help districts with these decisions, this document will be followed by additional resources to help provide guidance on the Standards.

Standards-based Curriculum Development: Guidance for Educators

The English Language Arts Standards do not dictate curriculum or teaching methods. Teachers and other educational leaders at the local level should use these Standards to develop or guide their selection of curriculum, programs, and individual lessons. Each district, building, and classroom should explore and choose "Best Practices" to achieve these Standards, while matching the approach to individual communities, work teams, students, etc. Standards introduced and taught at one grade-level should be reinforced and continued through graduation. Curriculum decisions in New York State are made at the local level. Examples in the Standards are included to help provide clarification; these examples are not mandates.

Academic Language/Language for School Learning

In these Standards, we acknowledge the central role of language skills in reading, writing, speaking and learning. It is the case that learning complex content and making sense of abstract ideas requires learning new language that supports precise, concise and accurate communication. This language is referred to as '**academic language**.' Comprised of knowledge of key terms used in a discipline (e.g., *photosynthesis, Fertile Crescent, alliteration*) as well as the general-purpose language used in all academic texts and talk (e.g., *words like however and therefore that connect ideas; phrases like, 'some have argued' or 'research suggests' that signal the writer's viewpoint and support argumentation*).

In addition, all students are acquiring the language needed for school learning—or the words and phrases that aid our students in understanding the learning tasks that occur in our classrooms (knowing the meaning of 'explain', understanding how to 'summarize').

Even our youngest students are acquiring the language needed to negotiate academic settings as well as academic language. In addition, regardless of the English dialect(s) students speak, all students must learn new language at school to master increasingly complex content.

Additional Guidance for Educators

As teachers implement the standards in their classrooms, the following key points should be considered and used to guide their own choices as they develop curriculum, lesson plans, classroom assessments, and professional development.

KEY POINTS:

- In addition to spoken and written communication, the student learning standards address inquiry, research, critical thinking, and problem solving.
- Students should employ the literacy skills embedded in the standards both individually and collaboratively.
- When choosing texts to meet the standards, teachers should provide a balance of classic and contemporary literature (both full length and shorter works). Works should be culturally responsive, relevant to all students and available in the home language when possible. Texts should reflect a global and diverse variety of authors, time periods, genres, and cultural perspectives.
- Although some standards may be taught and practiced in isolation, in actual use they are more often blended and interwoven.
- The development of all literacy skills requires extensive opportunities to practice, especially with authentic texts and real-life communication situations, including authentic social, cultural, professional, and academic contexts.
- The standards address a student's ability to read, listen to, and view creative works in various genres and across various cultures. In addition to acquiring knowledge about the history, forms, and artistic craft of the works studied, students are expected to develop informed written, spoken, visual, and digital responses.
- The word "text" should be construed as encompassing far more than printed material. Text may also refer to speech, graphics, visual art, digital representations, video, and other visual and audio depictions of ideas, concepts, and experiences.
- Students should understand and be able to observe the differences between the form and function of the conventions of academic English and features of informal written communication, speech, and electronic communication, with the goal of furthering their capacity to communicate with broader audiences using both conversational and academic English.
- The standards include frequent references to digital media. Students must achieve fluency and develop skilled practice in the use of current media, and, given the pace of technological development, they must be able to adapt quickly to new media as they develop. It is the case that what it means to be literate is evolving, and digital literacy encompasses an important area that must be addressed instructionally as a matter of equity.

Integration of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language Standards

By design, this document presents the standards in an organizational pattern that groups together the strands of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. This organizational scheme follows a pattern with which most teachers are familiar. In no way, however, does this format imply that these standards should be taught discretely in the classroom. A well-designed, richly developed lesson includes many standards from across a range of domains. Teachers blend reading with writing; they infuse language and vocabulary throughout their lessons; and speaking and listening play important roles in every classroom activity. Attention to and practice with digital media—both in reading and writing—are also essential to this blend of approaches.

The Role of Content Area Teachers: Shared Responsibility for Literacy Development

All disciplines have recognized the importance of literacy to their own subject areas as the vehicle through which important content learning occurs. Each of these subject areas has its own required set of standards, specifying the content knowledge in that area. These ELA standards are designed to connect with and support the knowledge and learning standards of these other content areas. Concurrent with the revision of the ELA standards was the revision of the Grades 6-12 Literacy Standards in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects. The Grades 6-12 Literacy Standards, which connect to the standards in the related content areas (Social Studies, Science, etc.), reflect the same revision and development as the current ELA standards. The intent is for these two sets of standards to work together. In this way, teachers from across the curriculum can work together with common expectations for their students' literacy.

This common goal shows up even more fundamentally at the elementary level, where a typical instructional model includes a teacher who provides instruction in a variety of subjects, in addition to ELA. Although the Grades 6-12 Literacy Standards share similar goals with the ELA standards, they also recognize that each subject area has its own discourse practices and nomenclature.